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STORIES FROM THE POETS

A READER FOR THE FIRST GRADE

BY
MAY R. ATWATER

ILLUSTRATED BY
JANE E. COOMBS



THE MORSE COMPANY
NEW YORK 1904. BOSTON

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Fifth Edition.

INTRODUCTORY.

THE subject-matter of this book is the result of practical work with first-year children. It is supposed that by the last half of the year the children will have acquired sufficient knowledge of phonics to be able to pronounce, independently of the teacher's aid, most of the words used here.

It is suggested that the reading be preceded by the storytelling, which is so vital a part of the primary teacher's work. The use of the story as a basis for the language and drawing lessons enables the child to clothe the simple expression of the reading lesson with much of the true grace and beauty of the poem.

Above and beyond all else, endeavor has been made to retain "The spirit which giveth life."

As Horace Scudder has so well said: "We have left out of account that very large element of wonder which inheres in the young child's nature, and we have been too neglectful of that pure sentiment to which the child is quick to respond. We must have a literature which shall not leave the child just where it was before it had conned it, but shall have given wings to its fancy and imagination,

and suffered it to take flight beyond the little confines of its sight and hearing."

Thanks are due to the following publishers for courtesy extended in permitting the use of extracts from their publications :

To Houghton, Mifflin & Co. for "The Birds of Killingworth," "The Bell of Atri," "Emperor's Bird's-Nest," "Rhoecus," "Sir Launfal," "Little Red Riding Hood," "Piccola," "The Sparrows."

To Little, Brown & Co. and Miss Coolidge for "How the Leaves Came Down."

And also to our Superintendent, who, by his friendly counsel and sympathetic aid, has done so much to help and encourage

THE AUTHOR.

New Haven, Conn.

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STORIES FROM THE POETS.

STORY OF PIPPA.

Pippa was a little girl.
She lived in Italy.
She worked in a mill.
It was a silk-mill.
Pippa wound the silk on
spools.

She had one day for herself.
She might go where she liked.



This is what she said :

“Sweet day, I have only you in all the
year.

Come to me bright.

Come to me sunny.

Make me happy.

I will try to make some one happy.”

The day came bright and sunny.

Pippa was glad.

She ran out doors.

She went into the country.

She sang as she went.

It was a happy song.

It was a sweet song.

Some children were quarreling.

They heard Pippa sing.



They stopped quarreling.

Some men were building a house.

One man wanted to make a large house.

He wanted to make a beautiful house.

They let him make the stairs.

The stairs were not beautiful.
He did not like to make them.
He heard Pippa sing.
This is what she sang :
“Never mind what your work is.
Do your best.
God wants you to do your best.”
So the man tried to do his best.
He tried to make good stairs.
He tried to make strong stairs.
Then he was happy.

Pippa went by another house.
A man lived in it.
The man was tired and cross.
He had work to do.
But he did not do it.

He heard Pippa sing.

This is what he heard :

“ God is in His heaven.

All is right with the world.”

The man got on his horse.

He rode away and did his work.

Then he was happy.

At night Pippa went home.

She said : “ Sweet day, you made me
happy.

You made me glad.

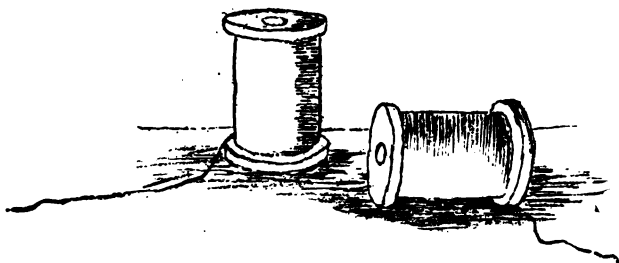
I did not make any one happy.

I did not help any one.

I did not see any one to help.”

But the day knew what Pippa had done.

Pippa went back to the mill.



She wound the silk on spools.

But she sang the same song.

This is the song :

“The year’s at the spring,

The day’s at the morn,

Morning’s at seven,

The hillside’s dew-pearled.

The lark’s on the wing,

The snail’s on the thorn,

God’s in His Heaven,

All’s right with the world.”

RHOECUS.



This is a fairy story.

Did you ever see a fairy?

Rhoecus saw one.

He was in the woods one day.

He saw an old oak-tree.

It was a beautiful tree.

The leaves were very green.

But the tree was just ready to fall.

“You shall not fall,” said Rhoecus ;

“I will help you, poor old tree.”

Rhoecus put a strong log against the tree.

Then he heard some one say, “Rhoecus.”

He looked all around.

He saw no one.

Again he heard some one say, “Rhoecus.”

He looked up into the tree.

What do you think he saw?

Yes, it was a fairy.

How beautiful she was!

“I am the fairy of this tree,” said she.

“I live as long as the tree lives.

I die when the tree dies.

The rain and sunshine are my friends.

I love the rain and sunshine.

I love my tree.

You helped my tree to live.

I will give you anything you like.”

Rhoecus looked at the beautiful fairy.

“Will you be my friend?” said he.

“I would like you for my friend.”

“Yes, I will be your friend.

Come to me before the sun sets.

I will tell you many strange stories.

I will show you many beautiful things.

Come to me before the sun sets.

Do not forget.”

“I will not forget,” said Rhoecus.
Then he could not see the fairy.
In a minute she was gone.

Rhoecus went on through the woods.
How happy he was.
The sky was so blue.
The sunshine was so bright.
Soon he met some boys.
They were playing a game.
“Come play with us, Rhoecus,” said they.
“I will,” said he.
They played for a long time.
It was late.
A little bee came flying through the air.
He seemed to bring a message.
Rhoecus was too busy to listen.



He flew around Rhoecus' head.
Rhoecus tried to hit the bee.
Three times he flew around Rhoecus.
Three times Rhoecus hit him.
The last time he hurt him.
The poor little bee flew away.
He flew to the woods.
Rhoecus watched him go.
He saw the sun.
It was just setting.
Then Rhoecus thought of the fairy.

“She told me to come before sunset.

I must hurry.

I must run.

I must get there before the sun sets.”

The sun went down behind the hill.

Rhoecus ran on and on.

It was almost dark when he came to the
oak-tree.

He looked all around.

He saw no one.

Soon he heard the fairy.

“Oh Rhoecus, why did you not come?”
said she.

“You said that you would come.

I would have been your friend.

I would have made you so happy.

I sent the little bee to call you.

You hurt the little bee.

You were not kind to him.

Only gentle eyes can see the fairies.

I am here, but you cannot see me.

Good bye, Rhoecus."

Rhoecus felt very badly.

"I will never hurt a bee or bird again,"
said he.

"I will try to be gentle."

Do you think that he ever saw the fairy
again?



RHOECUS.

A yellow bee buzzed about his ear
As if to light. And Rhoecus laughed
And brushed him off with rough, impatient hand.
But still the bee came back, and thrice again
Rhoecus did beat him off with growing wrath.
Then through the window flew the wounded bee,
And Rhoecus, tracking him with angry eyes,
Saw the sharp mountain-peak of Thessaly
Against the red disk of the setting sun.
Without a word he turned, and rushing forth
Ran madly through the city and the gate.

Then sighed the voice, "O Rhoecus! nevermore
Shalt thou behold me or by day or night.
Thou didst scorn my humble messenger,
And send'st him back to me with bruised wings.
We spirits only show to gentle eyes.
Farewell! for thou canst never see me more."

—*Lowell.*

PICCOLA.

Piccola lived in France.

She was very poor.

Her papa worked hard.

Her mamma worked hard, too.

They had very little money.

Piccola did not have any toys.

But she was a happy little girl.

“Christmas is coming,” said she,

“Then I shall have something to play
with.

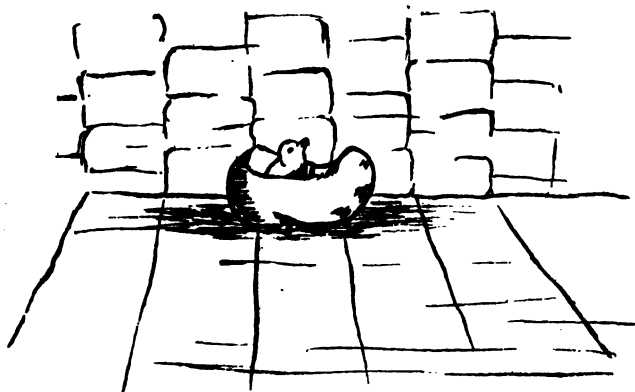
St. Nicholas will not forget me.”

Christmas Eve came.

What do you do on Christmas Eve?

Piccola did not hang up her stocking.

She put her shoe near the chimney.



The shoe was made of wood.

All the poor people have wooden shoes.

Soon it was morning.

Piccola ran to her shoe.

Guess what was in it.

A dear little bird.

It had flown in at the window.

It was cold.

Piccola's shoe was warm.

It crept into the warm shoe.
Piccola was very happy.
She fed the little bird.
It was not afraid of her.
She loved her birdie very much.
“I knew St. Nicholas would come.
I knew he would bring me a gift,” said
Piccola.



PICCOLA.

But Piccola never doubted at all
That something beautiful must befall
Every child upon Christmas-day,
And so she slept till the dawn was gray.
And full of faith, when at last she woke,
She stole to her shoe as the morning broke ;
“ See what the good saint brought ! ” she cried,
And mother and father must peep inside.
Now such a story who ever heard ?
There was a little shivering bird !
A sparrow, that in at the window flew,
Had crept into Piccola’s tiny shoe !
“ How good poor Piccola must have been ! ”
She cried, as happy as any queen,
While the starving sparrow she fed and warmed,
And danced with rapture, she was so charmed.

—*Celia Thaxter.*

THE LITTLE BROOK.



North Wind lived on a mountain.

It was a cold mountain.

There was snow on it all winter.

There was snow on it all summer.

There was snow on it all the time.

North Wind had a cave in the mountain.

The walls were of ice.

North Wind lived in it.

One day he came out of his cave.

He flew down the mountain side.

Some people were out walking.

North Wind saw them.

“I will have some fun,” said he.

He tried to blow their coats away.

He tried to blow their hats away.

He made them shiver.



“Now I will go to the tree,” said he.

“Perhaps I will blow the tree over.

How will the tree like that?”

But the tree was very strong.

The wind made it shiver.

The wind made it shake.

But he could not blow it over.

“Oooo,” said the wind.

“I will go and see what the Little Brook
is doing.

I will make him shiver, too.”

The Little Brook heard what North Wind
said.

“I will make a house,” said Little Brook.

“I will make it to-night.

My roof shall be of ice.

I will make pictures on the ice.”

He made pictures of fern and grasses.

He made pictures of birds and flowers.

Jack Frost helped him.

Jack Frost likes to make pictures.

In one place he made no pictures.

He left it smooth and clear.

That was his window.

The sun could shine through it.

The stars could shine through it.

The stars gave him light.

There were icicles in his house.

Little Brook played that they were trees.

There were some grasses in it, too.

Drops of water were frozen on the
grasses.

How they did sparkle!

They were the Little Brook's lamps.

Soon morning came.

“Oooo,” said the wind.

“Where are you, Little Brook ?

I want to make you shiver.”

The Little Brook was safe in his house.

North Wind could not find him.

Little Brook stayed in his house all winter.

He did not care for North Wind.

See if you can find his house this winter.



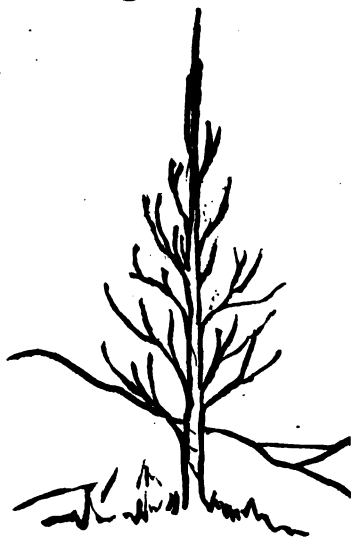
THE LITTLE BROOK.

The little brook heard it, and built a roof
'Neath which he could house him, winter-proof ;
All night by the white stars' frosty gleams
He groined his arches and matched his beams ;
Slender and clear were his crystal spars
As the lashes of light that trim the stars.
Sometimes the roof no fretwork knew
But silvery mosses that downward grew ;
Sometimes it was simply smooth and clear
For the gladness of heaven to shine through,
And here he had caught the nodding bulrush-tops
And hung them thickly with diamond drops.

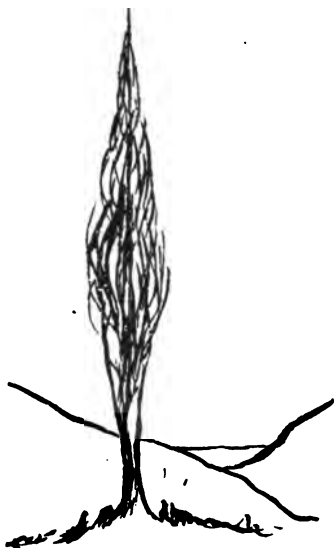
—*The Vision of Sir Launfal* (Lowell).

THE POPLAR TREE.

“Oh, what a beautiful rainbow!
One end is in my papa's woods.
I will go and find the pot of gold.”
The little boy ran off
to the woods.
He went a long way.
It grew very dark.
Still he ran on and on.
At last he found the
pot of gold.
How glad he was.
But the gold was very heavy.
The boy was a long way from home.
“What shall I do?” said he.



“I cannot carry this heavy gold.
I will hang it on this tree.
Then I will go and tell my papa.



In the morning he will
come and get it for
me.”

He hung the gold on a
poplar-tree.

The poplar branches
were like the pine
branches.

They grew straight out.

The tree was asleep.

It did not know what the boy had done.

No one could see the gold.

The leaves hid it.

Iris took care of the rainbow.

She had hung a pot of gold on each end
of it.

That was to hold the rainbow down.

The wind might not blow it away.

In the morning she saw that one pot
was gone.

She asked Mercury to find it for her.

Mercury went to the woods.

“Wake up!” he said to the trees.

“Have you seen the pot of gold?”

Wake up and tell me.”

The trees were very sleepy.

“No, we have not seen the gold,” said
they.

Mercury wanted to be sure.

“Hold up your arms!” said he.

“Then I shall know you are awake.”



BOLOGNA.

THE FLYING MERCURY.

All the trees held up their arms.

There was the pot of gold, hanging from
the poplar-tree.

The tree felt very badly.

“I did not know it was there.

I would not steal the rainbow gold.

After this I will always hold up my arms.

Nothing shall be hid among my leaves
again.”

The other trees laughed at him.

“You look like a closed umbrella,” said
they.

The poplar tree did not care.

He has held his arms up ever since.

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD.

How cold it was!

The wind sang in the pine trees.

The snow was very deep.

A little girl stood at the window.

She saw some birds.

The birds were looking for seeds.

The snow had covered all the seeds.

It had covered the nuts.

A squirrel was sitting on the snow.

He could not find any nuts.

He was hungry.

This is what the little girl said:

“The squirrel lifts his little legs,

Because he has no hands, and begs.

He is asking for my nuts, I know.

May I not feed them on the snow?”

“Yes, dear, you may feed them,” said

her mamma.

The little girl put on her boots.

She put on her red coat.

Her hood was red, too.

She went out to feed the birds.

The wind tried to blow her away.

She did not care for the wind.

She dropped nuts and corn on the snow.

“Come squirrel, come birds.

Don't be afraid. We are all good.

I am mamma's Red Riding Hood.”

The birds were glad to have the corn.

The squirrel took his nuts to the tree.

Dear Little Red Riding Hood, I am glad
you fed the birds and squirrels.



RED RIDING HOOD.

On the wide lawn the snow lay deep,
Ridged o'er with many a drifted heap.
We saw the sombre crow flap by,
The hawk's gray fleck along the sky,
The crested blue-jay, flitting swift,
The squirrel poising on the drift,
Erect, alert, his broad gray tail
Set to the north wind like a sail.
It came to pass, our little lass,
With flattened face against the glass,
Stood gazing through the narrow space her rosy lips
Had melted from the frost's eclipse.
"Oh, see," she cried, "the poor blue-jays!
What is it that the black crow says?
The squirrel lifts his little legs
Because he has no hands, and begs.
He's asking for my nuts, I know.
May I not feed them on the snow?"

—Whittier.

THE STORY OF THE RATS.



The rats bit the babies.

The rats killed the cats.

They ate the cheese.

They made nests in people's hats.

There were rats in the houses and rats
in the barns.

There were rats everywhere.

“What shall we do?” said the people.

“The rats will eat everything.”

Just then a strange man came along.

He wore such a funny coat.

Half of it was yellow.

Half of it was red.

He had a flute.

“I can take all the rats away,” said the
strange man.

“Will you give me a great deal of money
if I will do it?”

“Oh, yes, we will give you a great deal
of money,” said the people.

“We shall be glad to give it to you.

Do take the rats away.”

The man blew his flute.

The rats came running out of the houses.

They came out of the barns.
They came out of their holes.
There were big rats and little rats.
There were father and mother rats.
There were brothers and sisters.
You never saw so many.
They all ran after the man.
He kept on playing his flute.
Soon he came to the river.
The rats were with him.
All the rats jumped into the river.
That was the end of them.



How glad the people were!

How happy they were!

They rang the bells.

They laughed and sang.

“Now give me a great deal of money,”
said the man.



THE PIED PIPER.

But the people would not give it to him.

They gave him only a little bit.

What mean people they were!

The man was angry.

He began to play his flute again.

Out came the children running.

All the little boys and girls ran after the
man.

The people could not stop them.

The man went up the mountain side.

The children went with him.

A door was opened in the mountain side.

They all ran in.

Then the door was shut.

It never opened again.

Where do you think the children went?

THE WIND AND THE MOON.

“I will blow you out,” said the wind to
the moon.

“You are always looking at me.
You look to see what I am doing.
I hate to be watched.
I will blow you out.”

The wind blew hard.

Out went the moon.

The wind was glad.

He lay down to sleep. Soon he awoke.

There was the bright moon again.

She was looking right at him.

Said the wind, "I will blow you out
again."

He blew and he blew.

The moon grew very thin.

"I will blow again.

I will blow very hard.

I will blow you right out of the sky."

He blew very hard. The moon was gone.

"Now I will have some fun.

I will blow trees down.

I will blow chimneys down."

The moon shall not see what I do."

So away he flew. Soon he looked up.

"What's that?" said he.

It was the moon looking at him.

The wind was very angry.

He danced and blew.

He blew as hard as he could.

The moon did not go away.

She kept on shining.

"How strong I am!" said the wind.

"First I blew the moon out of the sky.

Then I blew her back again.

The moon did not know what he said.

She was too far away.

She did not hear him blow.

She did not know that there was any
wind. She made the night beautiful.

THE WIND AND THE MOON.

Said the Wind to the Moon, "I will blow you out!"
You stare in the air
Like a ghost in a chair,
Always looking what I am about,
I hate to be watched; I will blow you out.

The Wind blew hard, and out went the Moon,
So deep on a heap
Of dreamless sleep
Down lay the Wind and slumbered soon,
Muttering low, "I've done for that moon."

But the Moon she knew nothing about the affair,
For high in the sky
With her one ghost eye
Motionless, miles above the air,
She had never heard the great Wind blare.

—*Geo. Macdonald.*

HIAWATHA.

Hiawatha was a little Indian boy.

He had no mother.

His grandmother took care of him.

Her name was Nokomis.

They lived in a wigwam.

The wigwam was made of poles and skins.

The bed was made of skins, too.

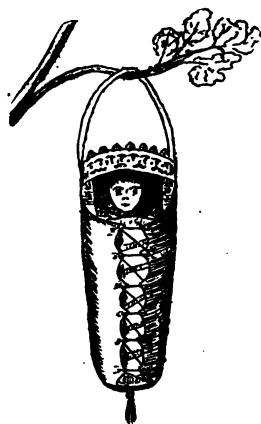
How did the Indians get the skins?



Hiawatha's home was in the deep woods.
There were many pine trees.
Hiawatha loved the pine trees.
He loved the water, too.
He lived near the water.
He called it the Big Sea Water.

HIAWATHA'S CRADLE.

Nokomis made a little cradle for Hiawatha.
It was made of wood and skins.
She put moss in it,
too.
The moss made it soft.
Nokomis put Hiawatha
into his cradle.
She tied him into it.
He did not cry.



She hung the cradle on a tree.
The winds would rock him.
The birds would sing to him.
The squirrels would talk to him.
How do you like Hiawatha's cradle?
Would your baby brother like it?

WHAT HIAWATHA SAW.

Hiawatha was sitting at the door of the
wigwam.
He saw the stars come out in the sky.
Soon he saw some other stars.
They were not in the sky.
They were flying over the grass.
He sang a little song to them.
This is the song that he sang:

“Wah-wah-tay-see, little fire-fly,
Little dancing white fire creature;
Light me with your little candle,
Ere upon my bed I lay me,
Ere in sleep I close my eyelids.”

Hiawatha saw the moon rise from the
water.

There were black spots on it.

“What is that, Nokomis,” said he.

What did she tell him?

Did you ever see a grandmother in the
moon?

HIAWATHA'S FRIENDS.

Hiawatha knew all the birds.

They were not afraid of him.

He knew where they made their nests.
He knew when the baby birds came out.
He loved all the birds.
He would talk to them.
He called the birds "Hiawatha's Chick-
ens."

Hiawatha knew all about the beasts.
He knew where the squirrels hid their
acorns.

Do you know that?
Tail-in-air was what he
called the squirrels.
He had names for the rab-
bits and the reindeer.



He would talk to all the beasts.
He called them "Hiawatha's Brothers."



HIAWATHA'S HUNTING.

Hiawatha had a friend.

His name was Iagoo.

Iagoo made a bow for Hiawatha.

It was made of wood.

The string was of deerskin.

Iagoo made arrows for him.

The arrow-heads were of stone.

They were very sharp.

“Go into the deep woods,”
said Iagoo.

“Go and shoot a reindeer.”

Hiawatha went into the
forest.

The birds saw his bow and ar-
row.

“Do not shoot us, Hiawatha,” said they.

The squirrels saw him, too.

“Do not shoot us, Hiawatha,” said they.

And the little rabbits said,

“Do not shoot us, Hiawatha.”

Hiawatha did not hear them.

He did not see them.

He was looking for a
deer.

Hiawatha hid behind
some trees.



Soon a deer came down the pathway.

Hiawatha shot the deer.

Nokomis made a feast with it.

All the people came to the feast.

They called Hiawatha Strong Heart.

HIAWATHA'S CANOE.

Hiawatha wanted a canoe.

He must make it for himself.



First he went to
a birch tree.

“Give me of
your bark, O
Birch Tree!”
said Hiawa-
tha.

“No, you cannot
have my bark.

It is my cloak.

I need it to keep me warm,” said the
Birch Tree.

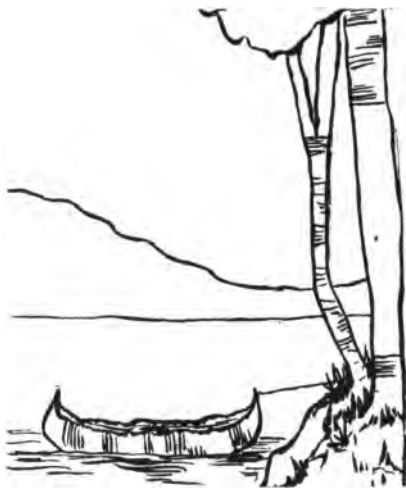
“The Summer time is coming,
And the Sun is warm in heaven.

You do not need a cloak," said Hiawatha.
At last the Birch Tree gave him her cloak.
Hiawatha went to a cedar tree.

"Give me of your
boughs, O Cedar.
I want to make my
canoe strong."

The Tree said,
"Take my boughs,
O Hiawatha."

All the trees helped



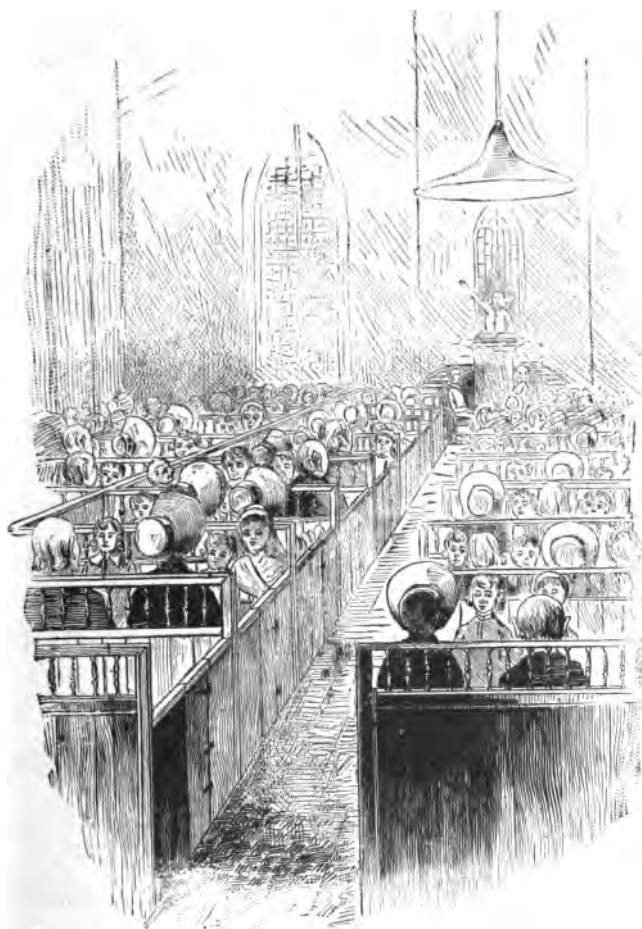
Hiawatha. Soon the canoe was done.
Hiawatha had no oars. He did not need any.
The canoe was like a fairy-boat.

"It floated on the water
Like a yellow leaf in Autumn,
Like a yellow water-lily."

RUTH ENDICOTT'S BEADS.



“Sit still Ruth,” said her mamma.
But Ruth did not sit still.
She was too tired.
She had been at church a long time.
She wished the man would stop talking.
She wished he would let her go home.
It was Thanksgiving Day.
He did not stop.
He turned the hour-glass over.



SOMETIMES THE CHILDREN SAT FACING THEIR SERIOUS PARENTS.

“Oh dear!” said Ruth.

“He is going to talk another.”

It took an hour for the sand to run out
of the glass.

The Pilgrims had no clocks.

“Do sit still!” said her grandma.

But Ruth could not.

She made a great deal of noise.

The man looked at her.

Another man shook his head at her.

Her mamma was sorry to have Ruth so
naughty.

The man turned the hour-glass three
times.

At last he stopped talking. Ruth was glad.

She was hungry for the Thanksgiving
dinner.

After dinner Ruth's papa called her.

He took her in his lap.

"You were a naughty girl," said he.

"You made a noise at church.

You did not sit still."

Then he looked at her.

She was fast asleep in his lap.

She had not heard what he had said.

By and by Ruth awoke.

Her papa had a string of beads.

They were beautiful gold beads.

There were flowers on them.

"You see these gold beads," said he.

"I will give them to you if you will be
good in church.

You must sit very still and make no noise.

Then you shall have the beads."

“Oh, what beautiful beads!” said Ruth.

“I will be very good.

I will be as still as a mouse.”

She kept her promise and was good.

Ruth grew to be a woman.

She had little girls of her own.

She used to tell them the story of the
gold beads.

THE BIRDS.



All the winter the birds were far away.

Now they have come again.

Are you glad to see them?

At one time some people were not glad
to see them.

The people were farmers.

“The birds eat up our corn,” said they.

“They eat our wheat.

They eat our seeds and our cherries.

We will drive away all the birds.

Not one bird shall stay here.”

One man loved the birds.

“The birds do not eat many seeds,” said he.

“It is the bugs and worms that eat them.

Birds eat the bugs and worms.

The birds help you. They are your friends.

Think how pretty they are!

Think how sweetly they sing!

You may hear them every morning.

‘It is always morning somewhere,

And from shore to shore,

Somewhere the birds are singing ever-
more.’”

We must be kind to the birds.

If you are not kind, your children will
not be gentle.

God made the birds.

He loves them. We must love them too.”



The people did not mind the kind man.

They drove all the birds away.

There were no robins or blue-birds left.

All the birds were gone.

But there were many bugs.

There were many caterpillars and worms.

The bugs ate the plants.

The worms ate the leaves of the apple trees.

They ate the leaves of all the trees.

They got on the people.

The people were sorry that they had sent the birds away.

They wished the birds were back again.

But wishing would not bring them back.

This is what they did when Spring came.

They put a great many cages into a wagon.

Then they drove far away to find some birds.

Soon the cages were filled with birds.

The wagon was covered with branches.

The cages were hung on the branches.

The leaves made it shady and cool for
the birds.

The birds sang all the way.

When they got back, the cages were
opened.

Out flew the birds.

They made nests in the trees.

The people were then glad to see them.

They were kind to them.

They knew the birds were their friends.



THE BIRDS OF KILLINGWORTH.

The robin and the bluebird, piping loud,
Filled all the blossoming orchards with their glee ;
The sparrows chirped as if they still were proud
Their race in Holy Writ should mentioned be.

You slay them all ! and wherefore ? for the gain
Of a scant handful, more or less, of wheat,
Or rye, or barley, or some other grain,
Scratched up at random by industrious feet,
Searching for worm or weevil after rain.

Do you ne'er think what wondrous beings these ?
Do you ne'er think who made them, and who taught
The dialect they speak ?

Whose household words are songs in many keys,
Whose habitations in the tree-tops even
Are half-way houses on the road to heaven !

Remember, too,
'Tis always morning somewhere, and above
The awakening continents, from shore to shore,
Somewhere the birds are singing evermore.

—*Longfellow.*

EGYPT.

Egypt is a country far away.

It never rains in Egypt.

The Sun shines every day.

There is a large river in Egypt.

It is the river Nile.

In the Spring the river is full.

The snow on the mountains melts

The water runs into the river.

That makes it very full.

It runs over the land.

The water covers the ground on both
sides of the river.

It makes the ground wet.

Then the people are glad.

They plant seeds in the wet ground.



They know that the wheat
and rice will grow.

They know that the pretty
green reeds will grow.

The reeds grow by the river.

They are tall and straight.

The people make baskets
out of reeds.

They make roofs of
houses.

They make mats.

The lotos grows in
the river Nile.

The lotos is a beautiful lily.

The people of Egypt love the lotos.

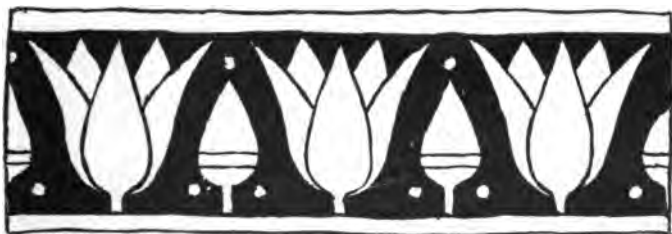
When they see it, they know that the
rice and wheat will grow soon.

They make pictures and borders of the lotos.

They make lotos borders on their vases.

They make lotos borders on their houses.

They thought that the Sun slept in the lotos.



THE LITTLE EGYPTIAN BOY.

Once there was a little baby boy.
His mamma loved him very much.
A bad man wanted to hurt him.
The mamma did not know what to do.
“I must hide my baby,” she said.
“Where shall I hide him?”
She lived near the river Nile.
The reeds were growing by the river.
They were tall and green.
“I will hide my baby among the reeds,”
said the mamma.
She made a basket of the strong, green
reeds.
She made it the way we make mats.
Then the baby was put into the basket.



The mamma hid it among the tall reeds.
She told the baby's sister to stand far
away.

"You may watch," said she,

"Watch and see if any one comes."

Soon a kind lady came along.

She saw the little baby among the reeds.

"You dear little baby!" said she,

"How did you get here?

I will take you home with me."

Then the little sister came near.

"I have found a little baby," said the lady.

"Do you know any one who would help
take care of him?"

The little girl ran and got her mamma.

She did not tell the lady it was her mamma.

The mamma went home with the lady.

She took care of her own dear baby.

The bad man did not find him.

Do you know the baby's name?

A DAY IN JUNE.

And what is so rare as a day in June ?

Then, if ever, come perfect days.

* * * *

The flush of life may well be seen

Thrilling back over hills and valleys ;

The cowslip startles in meadows green,

The buttercup catches the Sun in its chalice,

And there's never a leaf nor a blade too mean

To be some happy creature's palace ;

The little bird sits at his door in the Sun,

A tilt like a blossom among the leaves,

And lets his illumined being o'er run

With the deluge of Summer it receives ;

His mate feels the eggs beneath her wings,

And the heart in her dumb breast flutters and sings ;

He sings to the wide world, and she to her nest,—

In the nice ear of Nature, which song is the best?



A DAY IN JUNE.

We sit in the warm shade and feel right well
How the sap creeps up and the blossoms swell ;
We may shut our eyes, but we cannot help knowing
That skies are clear and grass is growing ;
The breeze comes whispering in our ear
That dandelions are blossoming near,
That maize has sprouted, that streams are flowing,
That the river is bluer than the sky,
That the robin is plastering his house hard by ;
And if the breeze kept the good news back,
For other couriers we should not lack ;
We could guess it all by yon heifer's lowing.

—*The Vision of Sir Launfal* (Lowell).

PERSEPHONE.

"I am going away.



I cannot take you
with me.

You may play with
the water fairies.

I will come back
soon.

Do not go to the woods while I am
away.

Stay with the water fairies."

"Yes, Mamma," said Persephone.

Away she ran as fast as she could.

Persephone loved the water fairies.

She liked to play with them.

They gave her sea-weeds.

They gave her pretty stones.

“I wish to give you something,” said
Persephone.

“I will give you some flowers.”

Away she ran to the woods.

She forgot what her mamma had said.

She found pretty flowers in the woods.

She picked them for the water fairies.

Soon Persephone heard a noise.

She saw a large hole in the ground.

Four black horses came out of it.

A man was driving them.

He took Persephone away with him.

He went down into the ground.

Persephone cried and cried.

By and by her mamma came back.

She could not find Persephone.

“Where is my little girl?” said she.

No one could tell where she was.

Persephone’s mamma took care of the
flowers.

She took care of the grass.

She helped the corn and wheat to grow.

“I will not let anything grow,” said she.

“Nothing shall grow till I find my little
girl.”

The grass turned brown.

The flowers did not grow.

The corn did not grow.

One day she met Mercury.

“Have you seen my little girl?” said she.

“I saw Pluto take her away,” said he.

“Pluto took her to his home.

His home is down in the ground.”

“Go and tell him to send her back.

Tell him nothing can grow till she comes
back.

I want my little girl so badly.”

Mercury went to Pluto.

“You must let Persephone go home to
her mamma.

Nothing will grow till you let her go.”

Pluto did not wish to let her go.

“She is a nice little girl,” said he ;

“I like to have her with me.”

“Do let her go,” said Mercury.

Pluto gave Persephone an orange.

Persephone swallowed six seeds.

“I am glad that you swallowed the seeds,”
said Pluto.

“You must stay with me six months.
You must stay one month for each seed.
You may go to your mamma now.
You may stay six months with her.
Then you must come and be with me for
six months.”

The flowers began to grow.

The grass turned green.

The trees put on their pretty green
dresses.

“What are you doing?

I told you not to grow till Persephone
came back,” said the mamma.

Then she looked up.

There stood Persephone.

How glad her mamma was to see her!

Soon the six months were gone.

Persephone went back to Pluto.

Her mamma was sorry.

She spread a white blanket over everything.

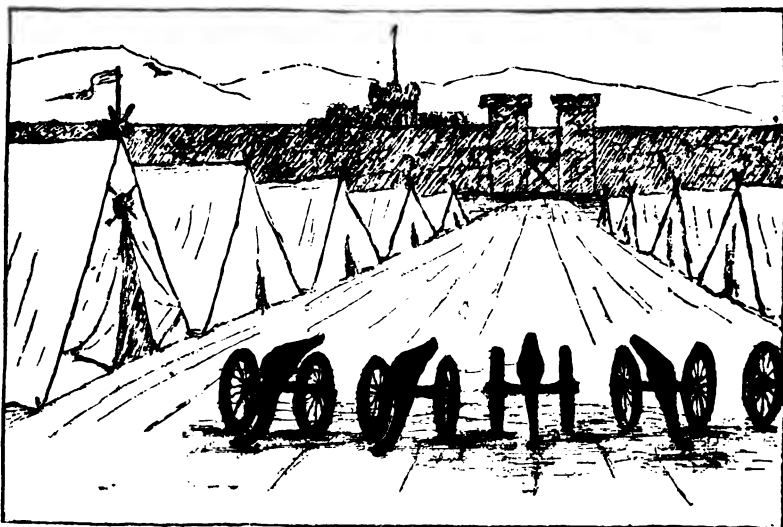
It was a snow blanket.

She takes off the blanket when Persephone comes.

Everything grows.

We say, "Spring has come."

THE EMPEROR'S BIRD'S-NEST.



There was a war in Spain.

The soldiers lived in tents.

The Emperor lived in a tent, too.

• The Emperor had a large tent.

The soldiers had small tents.

It rained many days.

The soldiers were wet.

They were tired and cross.

One day they were pleased.

What do you think pleased them?

They saw a little bird's-nest.

It was on the Emperor's tent.

The tent was so large.

The nest was so small.

The soldiers laughed when they saw it.

It was a pretty nest.

It was made of clay.

There were horsehairs in it, too.

Where did the swallow find the horse-
hairs?

The Emperor liked the nest.

He liked the swallow.

This is what he said to the soldiers :



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AMSTERDAM.

“Do not hurt the little bird.
Do not harm the nest.
The swallow has come to visit me.”
She sat still on her nest.
The guns made a noise.
The cannon made a noise.
But the swallow was not afraid.
There were some eggs in the nest.
She kept them warm.

By and by the war was ended.
The soldiers went away.
They took their tents with them.
They did not take the Emperor's tent.
He said, “Leave it standing!”
Why did he say that?

So the tent stood there all alone.
The cannon balls had made holes in it.
The winds had torn it.
But the swallow did not care.
Soon there were some baby birds.
They sat on the top of the tent.
They sang happy little songs.
The mamma bird was happy, too.



THE EMPEROR'S BIRD'S-NEST.

Perched upon the Emperor's tent,
In her nest, they spied a swallow.
"Let no hand the bird molest,"
Said he solemnly, "nor hunt her!"
Adding then, by way of jest,
"Golondrina is my guest,
'Tis the wife of some deserter!"
So unharmed and unafraid
Sat the swallow still and brooded,
Till the constant cannonade
Through the walls a breach had made,
And the siege was then concluded.
Then the army, elsewhere bent,
Struck its tents as if disbanding,
Only not the Emperor's tent,
For he ordered, ere he went,
Very curtly, "Leave it standing!"
So it stood there all alone,
Till the brood was fledged and flown,
Singing o'er those walls of stone
Which the cannon balls had shattered.

—*Longfellow.*

THE BELL OF ATRI.

King John was a good man,

He wanted to help people.

This is what he said to them :

“I will have a bell hung up.

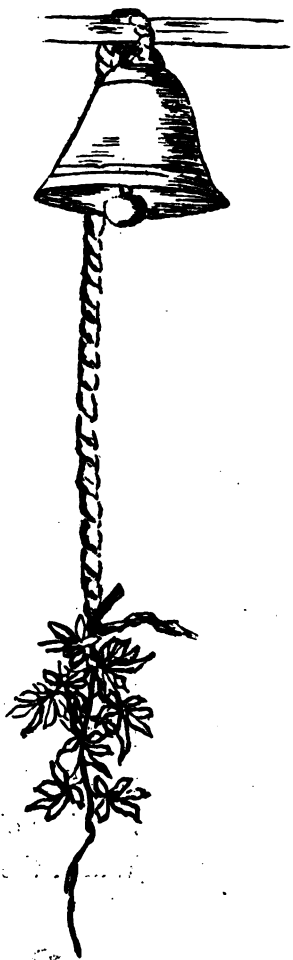
A rope shall be tied to the bell.

If you are in trouble, ring the bell.

I shall hear the bell.

I shall know you are in trouble.

I will come and help you.”



The people were glad to have the bell.
When they were in trouble they would
ring the bell.

King John always came to help them.
At last they wore out the end of the
rope.

That made it too short.

They could not reach it.

So a branch was tied to the end of the
rope.

Pretty green leaves were on the branch.
It looked as if the rope had green leaves
on it.

One man loved money very much.

He sold his dogs so as to get money.

He sold his land and his horses.

He kept one horse.

It was his best horse.

It had worked hard for the man.

But the man did not care for the
horse.

He did not like to feed it.

So he drove the horse into the street.

“You can eat the grass,” said he.

“I will not buy food for you.

Go into the street and get your food.”

The poor horse went into the street.

It was very hot.

There was no shade.

The grass was dry and brown.

The poor old horse did not find much to
eat.

The bell began to ring.

King John heard it.

It seemed to say—

“Some one has done wrong.”

He went to see who rang the bell.

It was the old horse.

He had seen the green leaves on the rope.

He was trying to eat them.

That made the bell ring.

King John looked at the poor old horse.

He was sorry for him.

“I will help this horse,” said he.

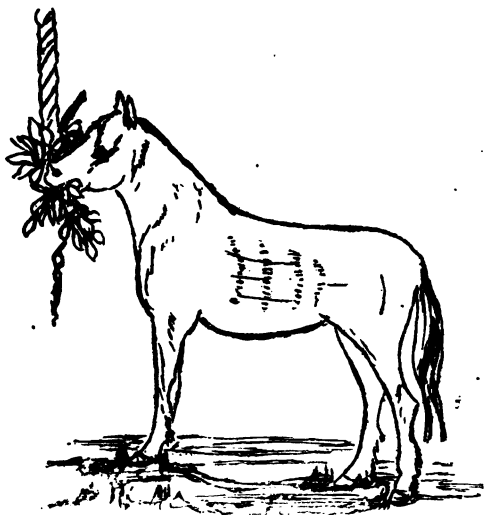
He told the man to take him home.

“Give him a good home,” said King John

“Give him food, too.

He has been a good horse.

He has worked hard for you.



Now he is old, you must take care of him."

The man took the horse home.

He was kind to him.

"I am glad I put the bell there," said King John.

"I am glad the horse rang the bell."

THE BELL OF ATRI.

The King

Had a great bell hung in the market-place
Beneath a roof, projecting some small space,
By way of shelter from the sun and rain.
Then rode he through the streets with all his train,
And with a blast of trumpets loud and long,
Made proclamation, that whenever wrong
Was done to any man, he should but ring
The great bell in the square, and he,
The King, would decide thereon.

* * * *

A knight said: "What is the use or need
To keep at my own cost this lazy steed?
Let him go feed upon the public ways;
I want him only for the holidays."

* * * *

The King then said: "As this steed
Served you in youth, henceforth you shall take heed
To comfort his old age, and to provide
Shelter in stall, and food and field beside."

—*Longfellow.*

THE LEAVES.



How pretty the leaves were !
One wore a yellow dress.
One wore a brown dress.
The very little one had a red dress.
The leaves were not happy.
I will tell you why.

“You are getting tired,” said the old tree.

“Little red is very tired.

It is time for you to go to bed.”

The leaves did not want to go to bed.

This is what they said :

“We do not want to go to bed.

Let us stay a little longer.

It is such a sunny day.

We want to play.

Dear father Tree, please let us stay.”

So the tree let them stay.

They were very happy.

They danced in the sunshine.

The wind helped them dance.

“Perhaps the tree will forget,” said they.

“Perhaps he will let us stay till Spring.

Don't say anything to him.

Just keep on play-
ing.

Perhaps he will
let us stay till
Spring.”

The old tree heard
what they said.
He smiled at the
little leaves.

He shook his head.

All the leaves dropped from the tree.

They flew down to the ground.

The snow spread a blanket over them.

“Good-night, little leaves,” said the tree.

“Good-night,” said all the leaves.

Soon they were all fast asleep.



HOW THE LEAVES CAME DOWN.

I'll tell you how the leaves came down.
The great tree to his children said,
"You're getting sleepy, Yellow and Brown,—
Yes, very sleepy, little Red ;
It is quite time you went to bed."

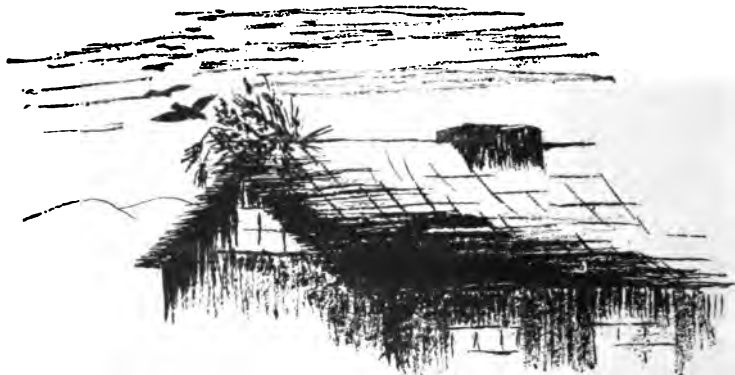
"Ah!" begged each silly, pouting leaf,
"Let us a little longer stay ;
Dear Father Tree, behold our grief,
'Tis such a very pleasant day,
We do not want to go away."

"Come, children, all to bed," he cried ;
And ere the leaves could urge their prayer
He shook his head, and far and wide,
Fluttering and rustling everywhere,
Down sped the leaflets through the air.

I saw them ; on the ground they lay,
Golden and red, a huddled swarm,
Waiting till one from far away,
White bedclothes heaped upon her arm,
Should come to wrap them safe and warm.

—*Susan Coolidge.*

THE BIRD'S CHRISTMAS.



Norway is a land far away.

Grain grows in Norway.

Bread is made from the grain.

Sometimes they do not gather all the
grain.

A few stalks are left in the field.

The children run out to the field.

They gather all the stalks that are left.

They put them away till Christmas.

It is very cold at Christmas time.
The ground is covered with snow.
The birds cannot find much to eat.
On Christmas morning the children get
the grain.
Sometimes they put it on the roof.
Sometimes they hang it over the door.
Then the birds come.
They come from the north and the south.
They come from the east and the west.
They are glad to have the grain.
It is their Christmas present.
It is their Christmas dinner, too.
The birds sing to the children.
That is the way they say thank you.
That is the way they show their happiness.

“And which are the happiest, truly,
It would be hard to tell;
The sparrows who share in the Christ-
mas cheer,
Or the children who love them well?”



THE SPARROWS.

Through all the land the children
In the golden fields remain,
Till their busy little hands have gleaned
A generous sheaf of grain.
All the stalks, by the reapers forgotten,
They glean to the very least,
And save till the cold December,
For the sparrows' Christmas feast.
Of a sudden, the day before Christmas,
The twittering crowds arrive,
And the bitter wintry air at once,
With their chirping, is all alive.
On the joyous Christmas morning,
In front of every door,
A tall pole, crowned with clustering grain,
Is set the birds before.
And which are the happiest, truly,
It would be hard to tell;
The sparrows who share in the Christmas cheer,
Or the children who love them well.

—*Celia Thaxter.*

"WHILE SHEPHERDS WATCHED." *

Like small curled feathers, white and soft,
The little clouds went by,
Across the moon, and past the stars,
And down the western sky ;
In upland pastures, where the grass
With frosted dew was white,
Like snowy clouds the young sheep lay,
That first, best Christmas night.

The shepherds slept, and glimmering faint,
With twist of thin blue smoke,
Only their fire's crackling flames
The tender silence broke—
Save when a young lamb raised his head,
Or, when the night wind blew
A nestling bird would softly stir,
Where dusky olives grew.

With finger on her solemn lip,
Night hushed the shadowy earth,
And only stars and angels saw
The little Saviour's birth ;



WHILE SHEPHERDS WATCHED.

Then came such flash of silver light
Across the bending skies,
The wondering shepherds woke and hid
Their frightened, dazzled eyes!

And all their gentle, sleepy flock
Looked up, then slept again,
Nor knew the light that dimmed the stars
Brought endless Peace to men.
Nor even heard the gracious words
That down the ages ring—
“The Christ is born! the Lord has come
Good-will on earth to bring.”

Then o'er the moonlit, misty fields,
Dumb with the world's great joy,
The shepherds sought the white-walled town,
Where lay the baby boy.
And oh, the gladness of the world,
The glory of the skies,
Because the longed-for Christ looked up
In Mary's happy eyes.

—Margaret Deland.

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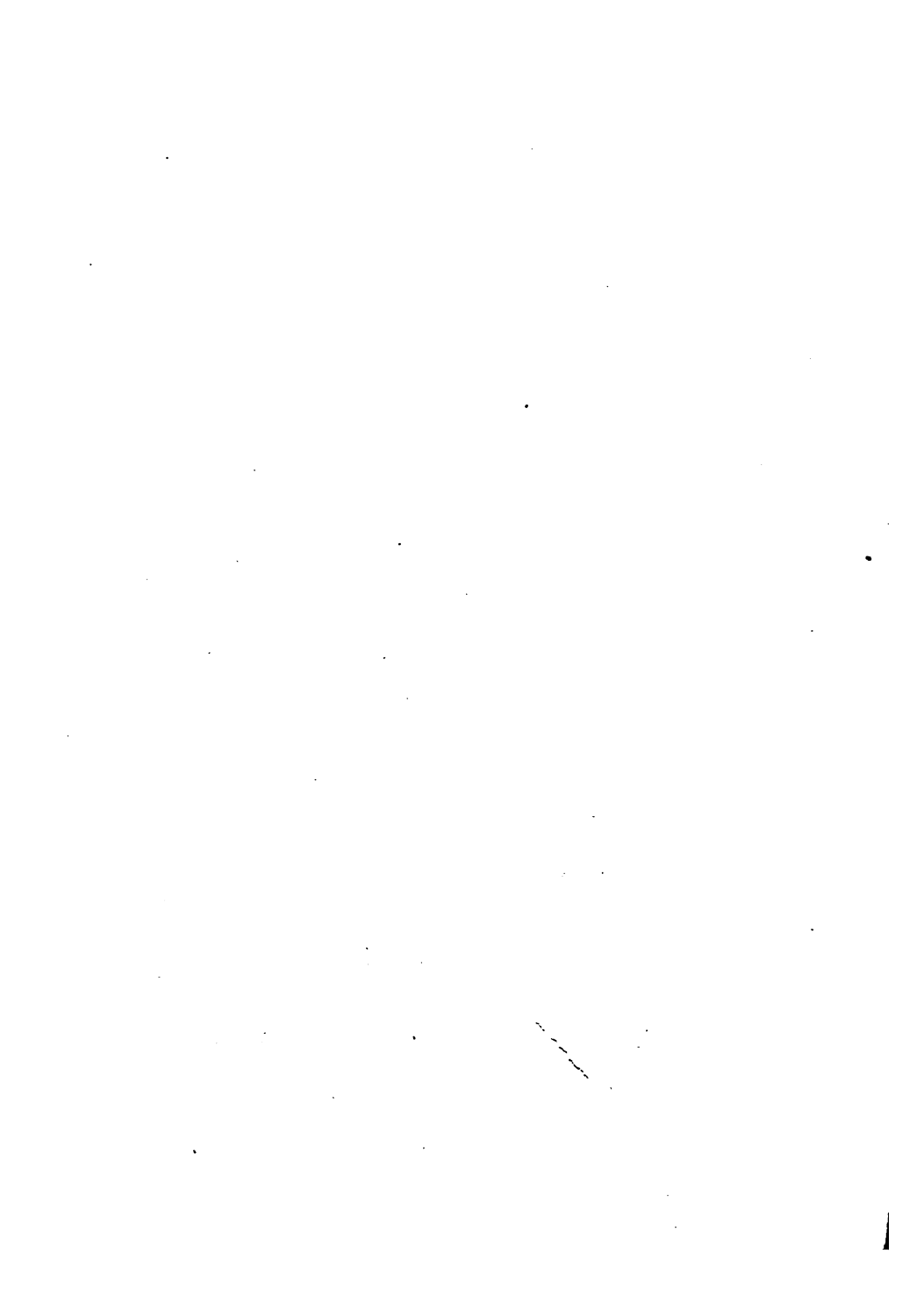
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